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38. (Amended) A shock absorber comprising a cylinder, the cylinder defining a chamber therein and containing a fluid; a piston rod sealingly projecting into the cylinder, the piston rod being axially displaceable with respect to the cylinder; a piston attached to the piston rod, the piston being slidably disposed within the cylinder to sealingly divide the cylinder into a first chamber and a second chamber; a passageway disposed in at least a portion of the piston providing for fluid communication between the first and second chambers; wherein the fluid comprises a biodegradable polyol ester, said polyol ester having a polyol component and a carboxylic acid component, the polyol component comprising a hindered polyol and the carboxylic acid component comprising a mixture of two or more C₅, C₆, C₇, C₈ and C₉ linear monocarboxylic acids; and wherein said fluid is at least 80% biodegradable.

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43. (Amended) The shock absorber according to claim 38, wherein the carboxylic acid component further comprises a branched carboxylic acid having from about 5 to about 10 carbon atoms.

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46. (Amended) The shock absorber according to claim 38, wherein said carboxylic acid component further comprises a dicarboxylic acid.

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54. (Amended) A shock absorber containing a hydraulic fluid for dampening movement of associated mechanical members therein, said hydraulic fluid comprising a biodegradable polyol ester, said polyol ester having a polyol component and a carboxylic acid component, the polyol component comprising a hindered polyol and the carboxylic acid component comprising a mixture of two or more C₅, C₆, C₇, C₈ and C₉ linear monocarboxylic acids; and wherein said fluid is at least 80% biodegradable.

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59. (Amended) The shock absorber according to claim 54, wherein the carboxylic acid component further comprises a branched carboxylic acid having from about 5 to about 10 carbon atoms.

62. (Amended) The shock absorber according to claim 54, wherein said

B7P carboxylic acid component further comprises a dicarboxylic acid--

68. (Amended) A method of dampening the movement of a mechanical member disposed within a shock absorber, wherein said mechanical member defines a first chamber and a second chamber within the shock absorber and includes at least one passageway for fluid communication between the first and second chambers; said method comprising providing a hydraulic fluid in the first and second chambers, the hydraulic fluid comprising a biodegradable polyol ester, said polyol ester having a polyol component and a carboxylic acid component, the polyol component comprising a hindered polyol and the carboxylic acid component comprising a mixture of two or more C₅, C₆, C₇, C₈ and C₉ linear monocarboxylic acids, wherein said fluid is at least 80% biodegradable, such that passage of the hydraulic fluid through the at least one passageway dampens the movement of the mechanical member--

73. (Amended) The method according to claim 68, wherein the carboxylic acid

B8 component further comprises a branched carboxylic acid having from about 5 to about 10 carbon atoms.--

76. (New) The method according to claim 68, wherein said carboxylic acid

B9 component further comprises a dicarboxylic acid--